

60¢
U.K. 25p
CAN. 75¢

80
JULY

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN

NOW FEATURING

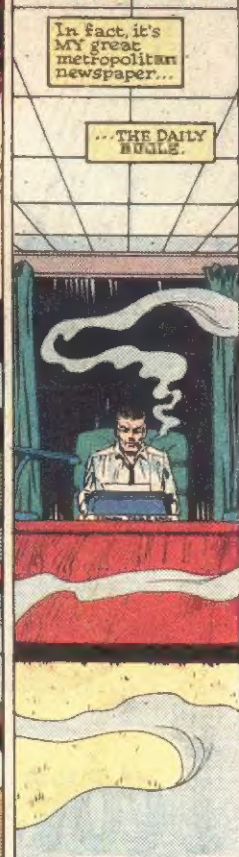
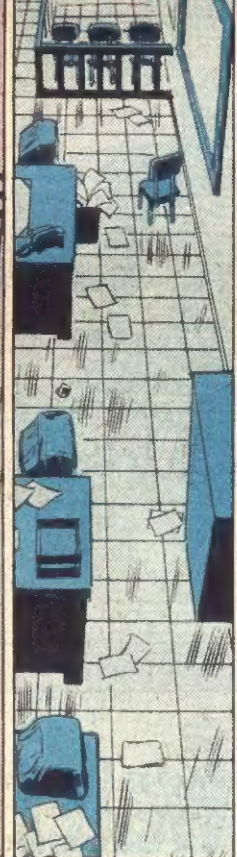
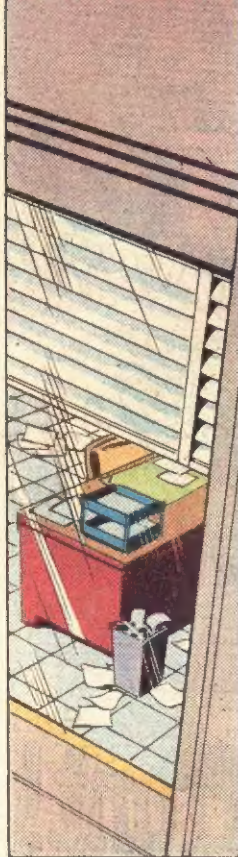
THE SPECTACULAR
J. JONAH JAMESON™

HERO
OF THE
PEOPLE





**KLAK-KLAK-KLAKITY-KLAK-DRIING
KLAK-KLAK-KLAK-KLAKITY-KLAK-KLAK-DRIING**



I'm it's publisher and Editor-in-Chief. You'd think that those titles would keep me busy enough...that I'd let my staff handle the business of gathering the news...

But I was...am...and always will be...a reporter! My beat is New York--the Big Apple--a city I love to its core.

Sometimes, though, the core is rotten.

Exposing the corruption is a newspaperman's job.

My job.



I cover the waterfront!

STAN LEE, PUBLISHER, PRESENTS A DAILY BUGLE EXCLUSIVE PRODUCED BY...

BILL MANTLO	RON FRENZ	KEVIN DZUBAN	JOE ROSEN	BOB SHAREN	TOM DeFALCO	JIM SHOOTER
Reporter	Photographers	Typesetter	Color	City Editor	Editor-in-Chief	

**KLAK
KLAKITY
KLAK
KLAK**

I didn't start this story.
I inherited it...

...one fine spring day
while out walking with
Dr. Maria Madison.

JONAH JAMESON, YOU ARE NOT THE
HARD-BOILED, HARD-BITTEN NEWS-
PAPER PUBLISHER YOU PRETEND TO BE!

I'M
NOT?

NO! I HAVE SEEN THE SOFT
CARAMEL CENTER INSIDE THAT
GROUCHY OLD BEAR IMAGE
YOU CULTIVATE!

NOT SO LOUD! ONE OF
MY EMPLOYEES MIGHT
BE SPYING ON US!
BESIDES, I AM TOUGH.

OTHERWISE I
NEVER WOULD
HAVE GOTTEN
TO WHERE I
AM TODAY.

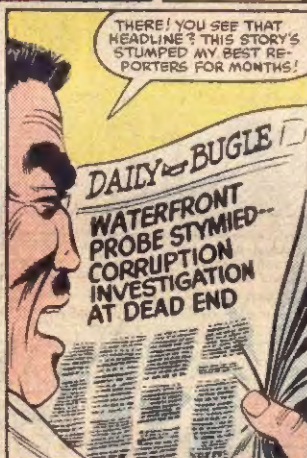
I started out in the Depression--as a copy
boy--at \$5 a week. I wanted to write. A story
I did on a soup-kitchen riot got me a job as a
reporter and a ten-buck raise.

The ten bucks got eaten up in shoe
leather as I ran from story to story.
No one knew how to drum up news in
New York better than me. I got made
city editor...



...then Editor-in-Chief of a paper that'd grown
as the city'd grown--had become the voice of
New York.

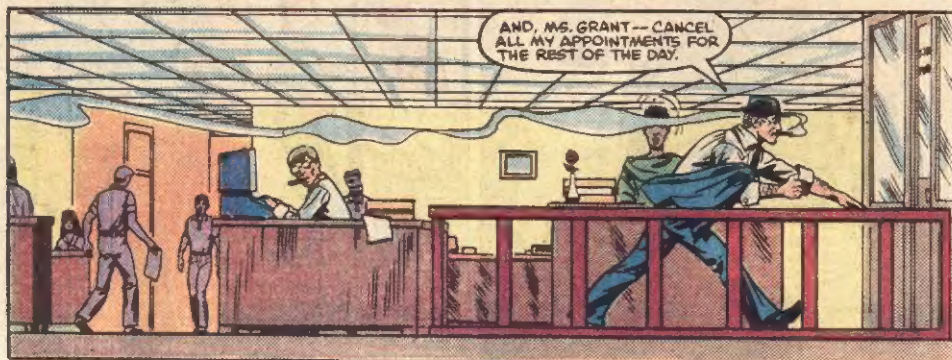
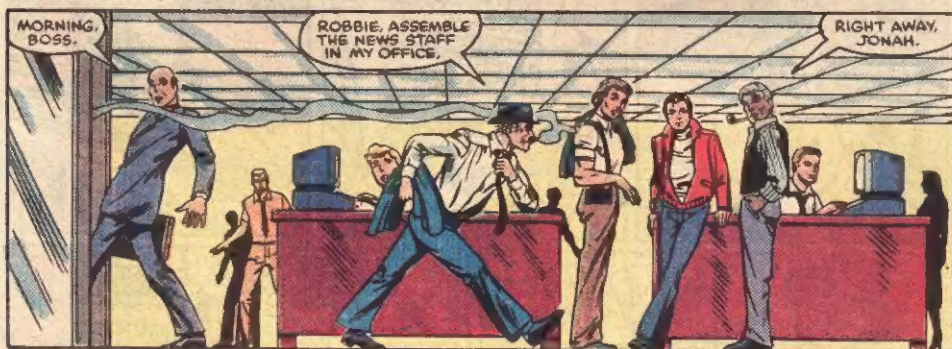
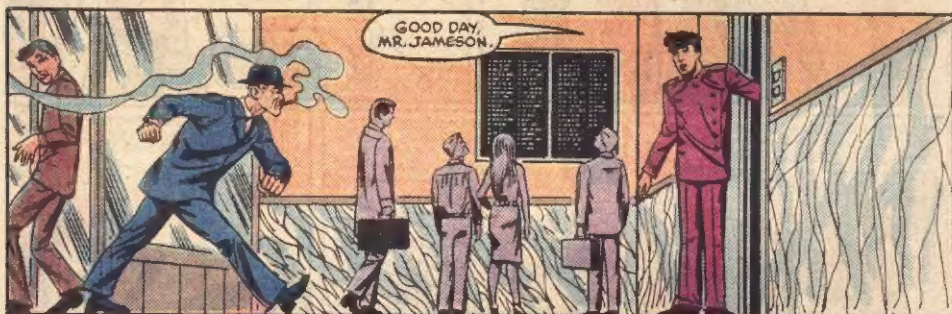
I loved the Daily Bugle.
When the old owners put
her on the auction block,
I put up every cent I owned
--and then some--and made
her mine.

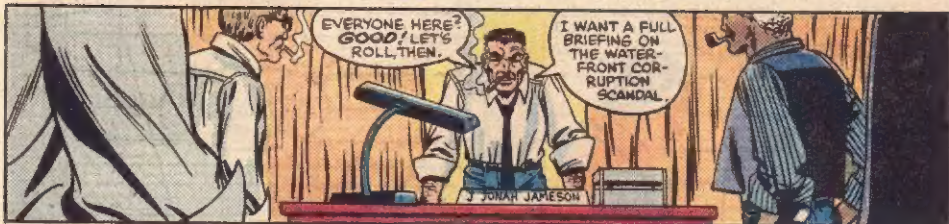


I had to prove myself to Maria.

I was a man in love, and the lady I loved doubted my ability.

Men in love do stupid things.





Two hours later, I had questions--and I knew where to go to get answers.

I'M GOING OUT, MS. GRANT.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, PARKER? NOT ENOUGH WORK FOR YOU AROUND HERE?



I WAS JUST WAITING FOR AN ASSIGNMENT, MR. JAMESON.



SHRRMPH!! IN MY DAY WE DIDN'T WAIT FOR ASSIGNMENTS TO FIND US--WE WENT OUT AND LOOKED FOR 'EM!



BUT THIS YOUNGER GENERATION IS SOFT.



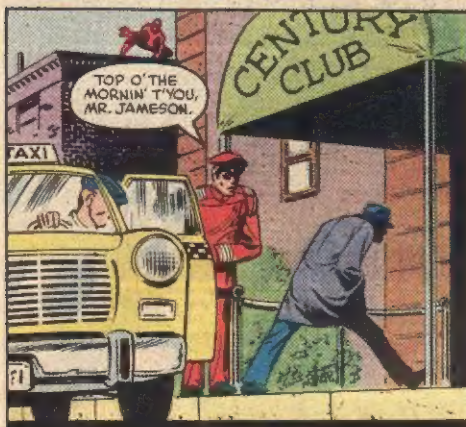
NO GUMPTION AT ALL!



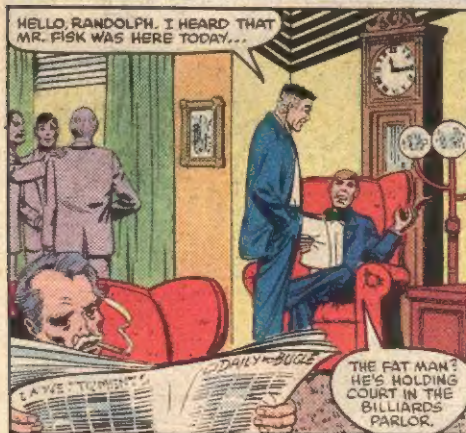
I'll be honest. Being on this story wasn't like the old days. It couldn't be.

I'm a different man now.

Wealthy. Powerful.



Wealth saves on shoe leather--power opens doors.



It looked as though there was a game in progress. There wasn't.

The fat man played alone. His bodyguards made sure of that.

CARE TO JOIN ME AT BILLIARDS, JAMESON?

I WOULDN'T CARE TO JOIN YOU AT ANYTHING, KINGPIN.

PLEASE...THE NAME IS WILSON FISK, ENTREPRENEUR.

YOU'VE DUPED OUR FELLOW CLUB-MEMBERS INTO BELIEVING THAT--

--BUT YOU'RE JUST A CROOK TO ME. I KNOW IT, AND SOMEDAY EVERY READER OF THE DAILY BUGLE IS GOING TO KNOW IT, TOO.

MR. JAMESON, I AM A STAUNCH ADMIRER OF THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS. HOWEVER, SHOULD YOU AND YOUR NEWSPAPER EVER BECOME A THORN IN MY SIDE--

--I SHALL SEE TO IT THAT YOU ARE PLUCKED.

YOU CAN'T THREATEN ME, AND YOU CAN'T THREATEN MY REPORTERS, KINGPIN.

AH, BUT I ALREADY HAVE...SUCCESSFULLY.

YOU'RE REFERRING TO BEN URICH AND THAT CHERRYH BUSINESS.

I'M SURPRISED HE TOLD YOU ABOUT THAT.

A STORY DOESN'T GET KILLED BECAUSE A REPORTER'S TERRIFIED, KINGPIN. IT GETS KILLED BECAUSE IT LACKS FACTS.

FACTS SUCH AS THESE.

HAAAA...YES, I COULD SEE HOW THIS INFORMATION COULD BE DAMAGING TO MY INTERESTS. NOT FATAL, BUT DAMAGING.

I DON'T MIND A LITTLE WHITTLED IF I CAN'T CHOP DOWN THE TREE.

WHY SHOW ME THIS? I COULD SHRED THE FILE...AND YOU...AND BE DONE WITH IT.

BALONEY. WHAT ANYTHING HAPPEN TO ME, THE PRESS WOULDN'T REST UNTIL YOU WERE BEHIND BARS. BUT, YOU'RE RIGHT--

--THE INFORMATION THOSE FILES CONTAIN WOULD ONLY DAMAGE YOU. I WANT YOU DESTROYED. THUS, I'M WILLING TO WAIT--

--AND TO TRADE INFORMATION FOR INFORMATION.

AN INTERESTING PROPOSITION. I GET THESE FILES--

--IN EXCHANGE... FOR WHAT?

FOR WHATEVER YOU KNOW ABOUT THE WATERFRONT EXTORTION SCAM MY PAPER'S TRYING TO EXPOSE.

SHALL WE START AT THE TOP: WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN AND WHY?

MR. JAMESON, I HAVE ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT I AM A BUSINESS-MAN.

LET'S DO BUSINESS, SHALL WE?

I left the club soaked with sweat --aware that I'd bargained with the devil for a small share of my soul.

I prayed that I'd done the right thing...

...but in journalism, there's no such thing as a guardian angel to answer one's prayers.

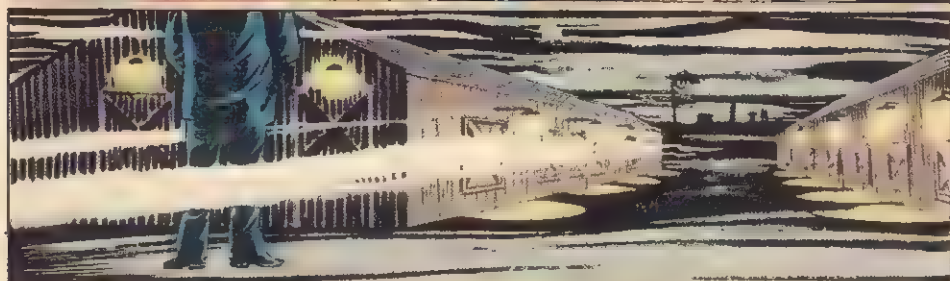
Still I'd gotten
what I'd come for.



Who



What



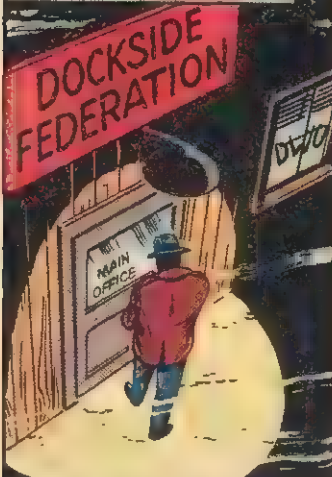
Where



Where



And, most importantly...why



The 'why' was
so simple



SKRASH



So simple

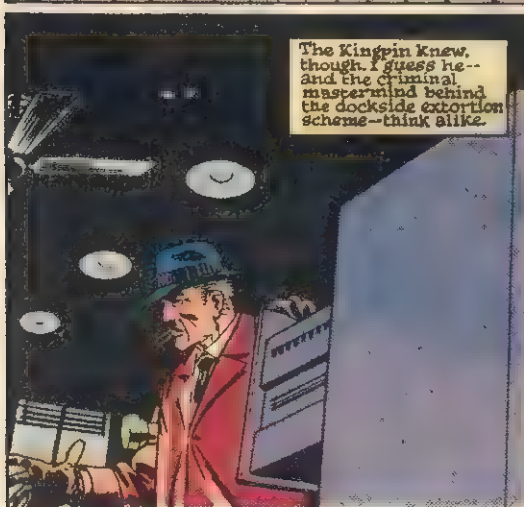


...and so
obvious.

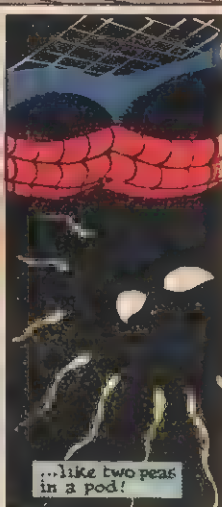
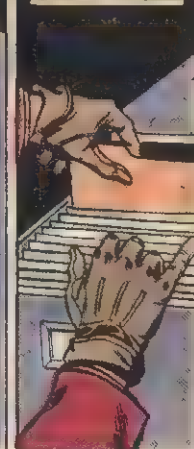
Too obvious, in fact. That's why my reporters and I missed it



The Kingpin knew,
though. I guess he--
and the criminal
mastermind behind
the dockside extortion
scheme--think alike.



Both crooked



...like two peas
in a pod!



It was all there in the files of the Dockside Federation...the organization established to combat corruption on the waterfront.

The figures all jibed with those given us by the Federation's bookkeeper.

The debits--monies paid out--to the shakedown thugs were all neatly entered.

It was the credits--the monies flowing into the Federation's coffers that interested me.



Obviously, it interested others, too.

GRAB HIM!
HE'S SEEN
THE FILES!



I ran

They followed



I felt sure they'd catch me--but they didn't.



Maybe Marla was wrong
about me being soft.
Maybe I was still just
as fast on my feet as
when I was a cub reporter...



Or maybe my pursuers
took it easy because
they knew there was
nowhere I could run.



Since they undoubtedly
knew the docks far
better than I did...

...I decided
to make my
stand.

THERE
HE GOES

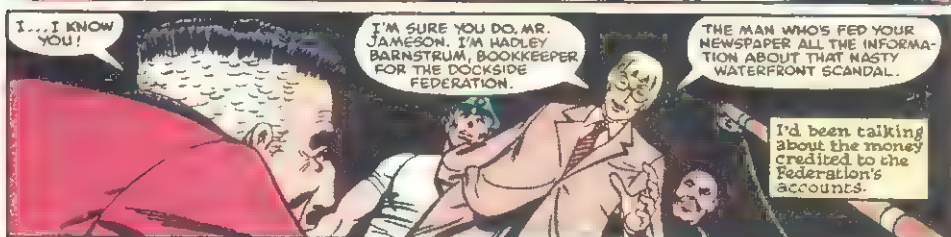
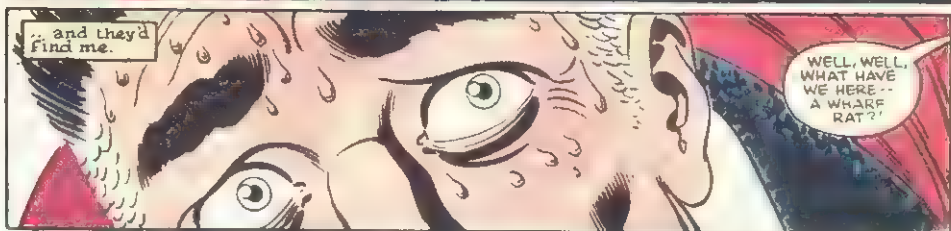
AFTER HIM!
DON'T LET
HIM--

I ran again

Practice must
have made me
faster...

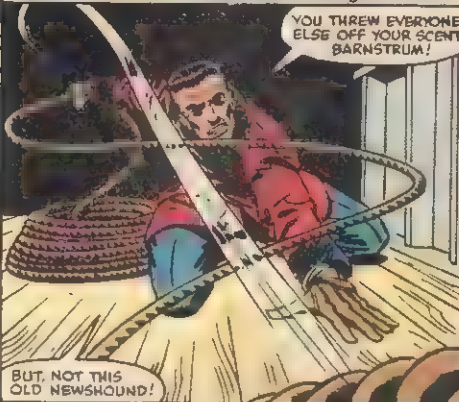
...because, again,
my pursuers failed
to catch me

Not bad for
an old news-
nack.



If anyone had thought to compare the Federation's income -- with the amounts extorted from the ship owners and the dock unions -- they would have found that the amounts matched perfectly.

The beauty of Barnstrum's scheme was that nobody made the match - because HE provided the figures--and HE demanded the investigation.



YOU THREW EVERYONE ELSE OFF YOUR SCENT BARNSTRUM!

BUT, NOT THIS OLD NEWSHOUND!

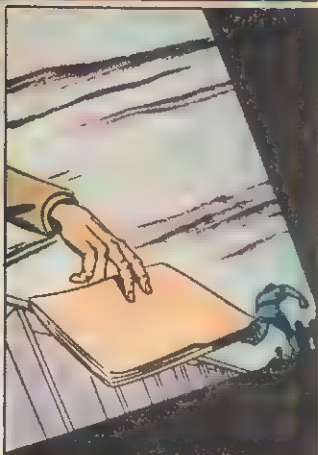
Pure bravado! What I'd guessed, the Kingpin had confirmed.



I'd give the fat man credit for that one day...at his trial.

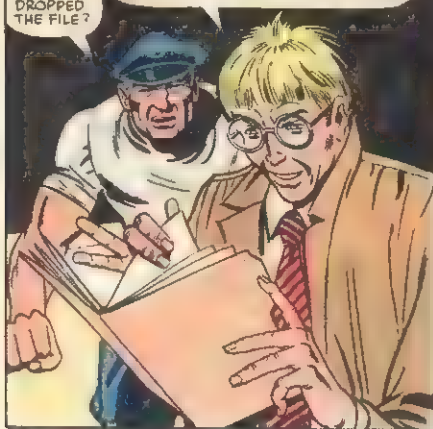


If I ever lived to attend it..



THE OLD GOAT DROPPED THE FILE?

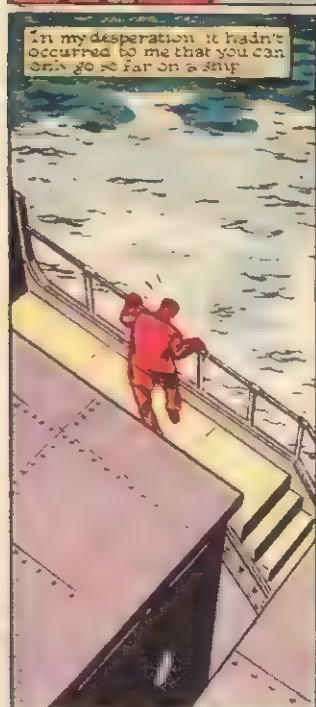
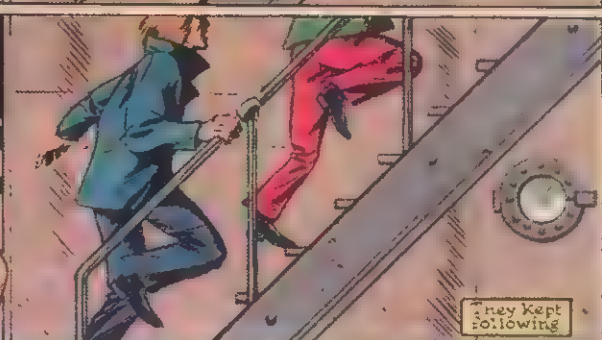
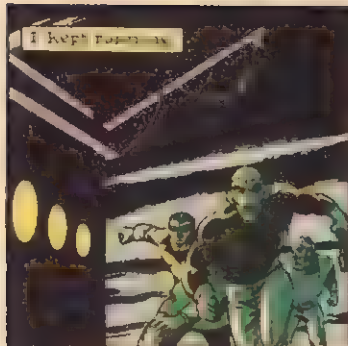
YES...SAVES US THE TROUBLE OF HAVING TO TAKE IT OFF HIS CORPSE.



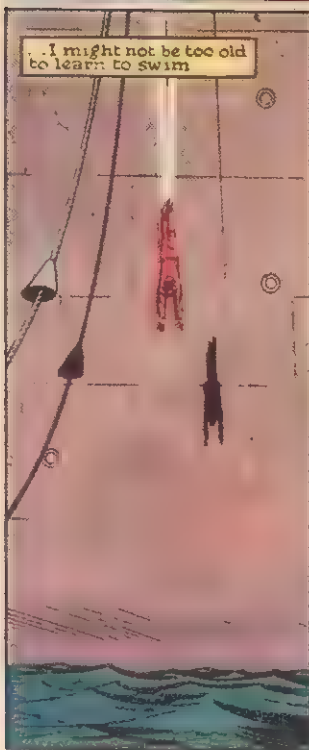
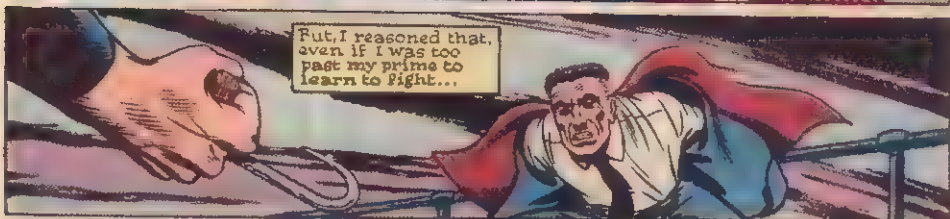
I'M AFRAID YOU WON'T BE TAKING THAT FILE ANYWHERE, FELLOWS!



NOT HIM!!



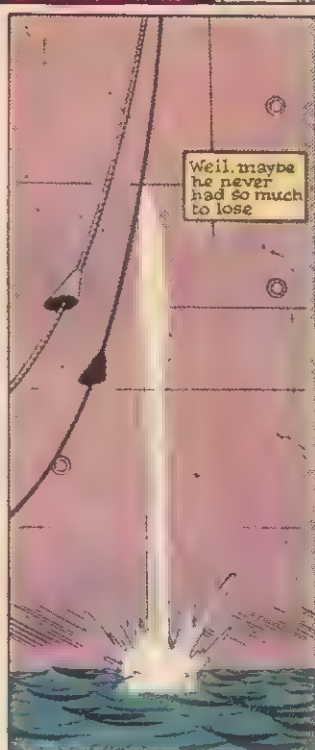
It was the classic dilemma! The Frying pan or the fire? Those muscle bound bone-breakers, or the briny deep?



...I might not be too old to learn to swim



Johnny Weissmuller never did it better.



Well, maybe he never had so much to lose



SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAIL

5% MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10018

TOM DeFALCO
EDITOR
ELIOT BROWN
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Tom,

Issue #74 was a classy way to end the Deb Whitman saga. Bill Mantlo is doing a SPECTACULAR job of plotting PETER PARKER! I'm hanging on a thread awaiting the Black Cat's return. Also, Bob Hall is a fine artist.

By the way, did you know that Peter Parker is a professor of Physics here at Yale? I'm not kidding! He also happens to be Associate Director of the Wright Nuclear Structure Laboratory at Yale University. Did Peter graduate from ESU without you telling us?

David R. Guzman
420 Temple St.
New Haven, CT 06511

Far from it, David! Check out **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #243** for a major change in Peter's graduate school status.

Dear Tom,

Although I really didn't want to see Deb Whitman go, I liked PETER PARKER #74 a lot more than I thought I would. The most pleasant surprise was that "the final fate of Deb Whitman" did not mean killing her: besides the fact that one gets tired of all the "special death issues" comics are doing these days, killing Deb would just have been a cheap way out of the problem. I commend writer Bill Mantlo for trying to write a sensible, sensitive story on a difficult theme. Still, the issue did have some problems.

First of all, why is Biff Rifkin suddenly such a wonderful person? We are told that Deb just has the idea that he's a "not-too-bright 'Joe Jock,'" but we have the same idea as well, because Biff has never been shown to be anything else. I never mind depth being added to a character, of course, but this should have been developed more gradually.

Secondly, I do feel compassion for Deb's problems - don't we all know women who for some reason seem to enjoy being treated like dirt? - but her cure was altogether too quick and too neat.

David Allen
5 Douglas Drive
Oiney, IL 62450

Who said Debra was cured? When we last saw her, she was headed home to try to resolve her past problems... so that she could start her life again. From where I stand, she's still got a long way to go...

Dear Tom,

Some fans might consider the conclusion of Debbie Whitman's psychological prob-

lems (as shown in PPTSS-M#74) to be a bit anticlimactic. But, for one, found the ending rather refreshingly different and the understatement a pleasure. True to reality, this issue reflected the fact that every event need not be a bang to be important. There is a place in all our lives for simple answers and quiet events. Why shouldn't this be also occasionally true for super-heroes and their friends? In an interesting and entertaining way this problem was handled most realistically.

The other thing I really enjoyed about issue #74 was the battle between The Owl and Doctor Octopus. It has always struck me as a touch unrealistic that the super-villains/villainesses within the Marvel Universe so seldom find themselves in conflict with each other. I hope the future presents us with more such rivalries (and their potentially very interesting outcomes).

Wallace Lee Hopkins
Box 428
Glen Carbon, IL 62034

Dear Tom,

I quote: "Real people in real life don't treat serious problems as if they were comic book situations!" That's the one part of #74 that I really believed, and it was of course contradicted by later resorting to a comic book solution to Deb's problem.

The whole thing has been rather comic book-ish from start to finish, but it has helped to underline a certain aspect of Spider-Man that has kept me from enjoying the feature for a long time: I'm not sure that I like Peter Parker all that much.

When was the last time I saw Pete do a truly selfless act? He leads a morally sloppy life. He neglects his studies (abuse of ability is what I consider immoral) and his friends, and pursues basic thrills as Spidey. Why is he bothering with school anyway?

Wait, you say, what about his selfless act for Deb in this very issue? What about it? Maybe my perception is colored, but I can't escape the feeling that Parker was not acting out of selfless nobility, but only to save face, to prove that he is after all, a swell guy. What jogs him into action? Not a kick about Deb's awful state, but a blow to his own noble self-image. Parker has been the underdog for so long that he, and many of us out here, have automatically assumed that he's a swell guy. Standard American Assumption. But, from start to finish with this Deb thing, he's screwed up by being selfish.

There was a time when Parker was affecting adolescence, trying to balance a host of

difficult priorities. That's why we all dug him so much: we could empathize with having a billion hard choices to make and seeming to choose wrong 75% of the time.

But that time has passed. Pete has achieved success at the top of two fields as himself: noted photographer and outstanding scholar. By the peculiarities of Marvel time, he is the grand old man of superheroing, with greater amounts of (recorded) experience than any other. He has almost been married and grown from a skinny, four-eyed gimpy to a proto-hunk that any of us out here would be glad to look like. And still he only barely seems to have his act together.

Have I seen him reach out or help the people around him? Has he made little offers of help? Visited a friend? Peter Parker has reminded me of many people I knew when I was a lot younger, and no longer keep in touch with. While I've been growing up, he's been standing still.

Why bother to rant? I could suggest that Pete make some real, hard career choices. Or that he stop his adolescent whining and start a more responsible adult-type life, or relax and spend some time sharing with friends. I could suggest that the feature look for a new approach and let Parker join the ranks of the grown super heroes, like Captain America or Iron Man.

verde
RD #2 Box 23
Franklin, PA 16323

I think you're being a little rough on Peter, verde, but we're curious as to what the other readers feel, too. Let us know: is Peter unlikeable?

Dear Tom,

I think there is hope for Peter Parker yet. He actually took the chance of risking his secret identity to cure Deb Whitman's problem.

Issue #74 of PPTSSM was an all round great issue.

The Black Cat is back (for the third time), are she and Spidey ever going to become allies instead of (so-called) enemies?

Eric James Baich
77A Fines Drive
Regina, Sask, Canada S4N 6C1

Wait, and see...

NEXT ISSUE: Cloak & Dagger and the Punisher! Justice and vigilantism, or is it the other way around? Be here in thirty and see...

Tom DeFalco

JOHN BYRNE'S

ALPHA FLIGHT

--IS COMING THIS SPRING! 'NUFF SAID, EH?

